



John Reich Journal

Volume 6/Issue 1

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JRCS

JOHN REICH COLLECTORS SOCIETY
P.O.Box 205 Ypsilanti, Mich. 48197

The purpose of the John Reich Collectors Society (JRCS) is to encourage the study of numismatics, particularly United States gold and silver coins minted before the introduction of the Seated Liberty design, and to provide technical and educational information concerning such coins.

Annual dues \$10.00

For membership information write to the above address.

The **John Reich Journal** is the official publication of the Society and is distributed to all members in good standing. Members are encouraged to submit any articles encouraging the study of numismatics and/or relating to early United States gold and silver coins to the editor. Especially needed are articles containing new information about die varieties, die states of published die varieties, attribution methods, collections, collectors, etc. Inquiries about specific varieties will be directed to one of the experts in that series. All correspondence should be directed to:

David J. Davis, Editor
P.O. Box 205
Ypsilanti, MI 48197

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Cover Photos: 1829 Curled Base 2 Bust Dime (JR-10). This is the discovery piece found in Dayton, Ohio in 1973.
Courtesy of: John McCloskey, discoverer.

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EDITOR'S COMMENTS

'Tis Sunday, August 16th, and my first day back from the A.N.A. annual convention. It was a great convention and there was a super turnout at the annual **JRCS** meeting. The existing officers and board were reelected. There were over 70 people that came in at various times. We had asked for 75 chairs and it was almost standing room only. The program drew a very enthusiastic response. Some of us were still talking about counterstamped quarters at the noon opening of the bourse. Was anything resolved during the discussion? You will have to wait for the report from Bob Spangler. Hopefully, it will be in the next issue.

Which brings us to this issue of the **JR Journal**. In Chicago, one of the members suggested that I just declare 1990/91 null and void, extend everyone's membership one year and date this 1991. Then I would be ahead of schedule instead of behind. An interesting thought but I am not ready to give up, yet!

I left the above two paragraphs just as I wrote them one year ago. Little did I suspect what has happened since then. As you now know, I am giving up the editor's job. You have already received Vol.6 No.2 and No.3. Whether this issue is timely enough for a tally of voting for Best Article, before A.N.A., is questionable. Send them in and the new editors and I will decide at Orlando about how to handle the results.

While I have given some consideration to resigning, I intend to stay on as President. Hopefully, giving up some of my responsibilities will allow me to do more writing for the **Journal**.

I want to extend belated congratulations to the winners of Vol. 5's voting for best liked articles. As announced in Chicago, top vote getter was Russell Logan's well researched article on THE CRUSHED LETTERED EDGE BUST HALF DOLLARS of 1833-1836. The subject was also discussed at the BHNC board meeting and it was a split vote about whether or not CLEs should be included in a complete set of die marriages. Over the years they have and have not been included in the BHNC census. Those who wish to disenfranchise the CLEs argue that they are not in the Overton book (a mistake in my and some other peoples opinion) and should be considered fantasy pieces or patterns like the platinum or uniface specimens. The other side feels that the CLEs are simply proofs, contemporary and die marriages that can be either collected or not based on ability to buy them. Collectors in other series with proof only issues seem to have no difficulties in deciding whether or not they will collect them. Would anybody outside of BHNC like to enter the discussion??

In second place was my little story, THE PLEASURES AND PERILS OF BIDDING AT AUCTION. Need any more assurance that it isn't necessary to be a scholar to please our readers? The third highest vote total was for everybody's favorite author Sheridan Downey, III and his article on THE REAL TOUGHIES - A NUMERIC CENSUS. Sheridan's TOUGHIES just beat out the next three highest vote getters. They were all separated by just a single vote and in order were, THOSE DARNED COUNTERSTAMPED BUST QUARTERS by Mark Hotz, Sheridan's A LITTLE JOURNEY THROUGH THE BUST HALF AUCTIONS of 1988-1990, etc. and QUESTIONING THE CAPPED BUST HALF DOLLARS by Edgar Souders.

At the tail end of the voting was 'Twas the Night Before A BHNC. I assume this is not a dislike for prose, just the result of difficult choices. I say this because I think the poems are neat. Maybe we need another award category.

A few bookkeeping items. The mail for Jurgan Almlie is being returned. Does anyone know his whereabouts? Are your copies of the **Journal** arriving in good condition? Replacements are available if needed. The supply of back issues is dwindling and at the rate they are selling it is only a matter of time before some of them run out. If you want a complete set of **JR Journals**, don't wait too long. Anyone want to wait until I get around to doing a collected works?? Someone else want to tackle the job?

I sent out quite a few copies of the errata sheet (the correct photos for 1820 JR-13) for the dime book. If I missed you or you still need one please advise. Most of you are aware of the last postage increase and the proposed new one. **NOTE:** the mention of membership dues on the inside cover of Vol.6 No. To help remind you I am enclosing the familiar renewal notice. We have had an inquiry about mailing the renewal notice separately. Anyone else think this is necessary? I hope this won't be a problem for some of you who have already paid for the coming year. The question has been asked about copyrights on the **JR Journal**. "Why don't we do it?" I don't know. I never felt it was necessary. It is my understanding that anything published with a date and the author's name is protected for the author. Do we need any other protection? Any attorneys out there?

In August, 1991, I planned to announce that an author had volunteered to write the John Reich story using Stew Witham's notes. The project is now off again and Stew is still looking for help. Any other takers??

David Kahn raised the idea of a book service for members. I had several volunteers and a limited expression of interest by members. It was discussed at our annual meeting and a committee was appointed to investigate alternatives. The least painful method to all involved seems to be negotiating a discount percentage for members with a wholesaler. This would require only a bookkeeper, eliminate storage and make the largest number of titles available. If anyone has any additional ideas, please forward them to Jules Reiver for consideration.

This issue contains a lot of letters, due to the length of time between issues. Some of them may be dated slightly, but I think all are still worth publishing. One of the letters refers to chopmarked half dollars. If any members have same, please drop Everett Jones a note, ASAP.

If during this past year I have failed to either publish or send to Harrison, Ohio for publication all articles mailed to Ypsilanti, please advise. Known articles that have yet to be published include; 1821 B-6 Quarter, McCloskey; 1823 Quarter Reverse, Reiver/Rungren and 1829 V-4, V-5 & V-17, Bricker. My records are a shambles and I don't want to overlook any of your efforts. Your efforts are appreciated and we will publish just about everything we receive.

Vol. 6 was to have used the J.N.T. Levick / Wm. Fewsmith, etc. Prooflike 1823 quarter as a cover photo, in anticipation of an article I am preparing about provenance and a guestimate of the known pieces. I am still working on it and I would like to solicit the membership's help. If you know the present whereabouts of any specimens, and you haven't already been contacted, drop me a note.

The contents of this issue feature some of our more familiar authors, Parsley, Souders, Logan, Reiver, one of our longtime dollar collectors, Bob Stark, another tale from Leonard Schramm and a couple of new guys, Mike Preston and Louis Scuderi. I have had Russ' review of the new Overton for a while, but it is still worth while and the answer to someone's question. Anybody else want to comment? Read the next issue of the **Journal** for my review of the Highfill, Silver Dollar book.

And so the first shall come last. You now have received the final installment of Vol.6 of the **JR Journal**, issue No.1. I don't doubt that the new co-EDITORS will deliver as promised, and on time. Remember, it takes a lot of help to fill four issues a year. Enjoy, and I hope to see most of you at A.N.A.

David J. Davis

PLAUDITS, PANS, AND PERPLEXING POINTS

Collectors of Chinese chopmarked coins are seeking information from the membership and readers about U.S. coins that have chopmarks.

A new club was formed in April 1990 for collectors of chopmarked coins of the world. Our first newsletter was released in October and newsletter #2 will cover countries A thru C with chopmarks.

The most common U.S. coin that circulated in the Far East, was the Trade Dollar. Chinese shroffs often chopmarked these coins to assure their fineness as a defense against debased counterfeit coins. Other U.S. coins from half dimes to dollars have been found with chopmarks.

We plan to have our information on chopmarked U.S. coins assembled by the end of 1991. We will share our information when completed, with your publication. Anyone who wants more information or has a chopmarked coin and will help us in this research, are asked to write to:

Everett R. Jones, P.O. Box 3302, Chula Vista, CA 91911.

Thanks



Enclosed is my vote on 1990 **JR Journal** articles. Tough as usual because I found all both interesting and informative.

Came home from the Coin Shop yesterday with a low grade, but interesting 1833 JR-1 dime. The reverse cud on this VG-8 piece is fully developed, with just the tops of ST in STATES visible. What made it interesting to me was the die crack from the right scroll to the right base of A2 and out to rim. Has this been seen before? Perhaps an even bigger cud developed. If you have some information, let me know.

Assume you have received your 3rd Edition of Overton from Don Parsley. I was somewhat disappointed that the Limited Edition wasn't "prettier." My expectations for the photographs were probably unrealistic, but I do find the new edition makes attribution easier. A few typos to fix with the next printing, but that is not much to be concerned with. Is anyone going to do a review of the book?

Dick Kurtz

Limiting my votes to just three makes it so tough to chose! Thanks for a great job with the **Journal**. I really enjoy it. Can't wait to see the next issue.

Steven H. Heinen

Many of you may already be familiar with the term "pressings" through your ties with the Early American Coppers Club. The large cent collectors have been using pressings for many years to trade information about die states and varieties.

A pressing is an aluminum foil impression of a coin made with a converted Notary Seal press. The 'dies' of the Seal are removed and replaced with a rubber covering. A 2" X 4" piece of foil is cut and smoothed and then folded in half. You insert your coin between the foil (bright side folded in) and insert it into the press. You operate the press with moderate force to obtain your foil "replica." The process is harmless to circulated coins. After removing your coin trim the edges and put the impression into a dollar size Whitman Snap-Lock holder for safekeeping. The impressions are remarkably detailed and I have attributed many halves from impressions.

The practical use of pressings include:

- 1) Help in attributing halves.
- 2) Die state studies to record pieces not in your reference collection.
- 3) Study of pieces that you are contemplating buying or trading.
- 4) Proof that the piece exists.
- 5) General research by someone who cannot own the coins, especially rare varieties.
- 6) Proof of ownership - recording your collection without resorting to photos.

All of these uses are possible without subjecting your coins to U.S.P.S. or anyone else. You can keep a reference collection at home while your coins remain in your safe deposit box.

Anyone interested in seeing a pressing please send a SASE to me and I will forward one for your inspection.

Brad Karoleff 2092 Mall Road Florence, KY 41042

Here is my membership renewal application, my check and my ballot for the **JRCS** "Oscars" for the best articles of 1990-1991.

It almost unfair to limit the awards to three winners. This year the agonizing was longer and more difficult than ever before. As you will note, I've listed eight votes, in the numerical sequence of article value and interest to me. I could have easily added another one or two votes.

Anyway, our literary genius, Sheridan Downey, gets my No.1 vote. His copy, even though relating to technical data, flows smoothly and clearly. He has a professional way with words and phrases. Keep him on the payroll!!!

Those Darned counterstamped bust quarters are intriguing, and Mark Hotz has done a better job with the subject than any preceding efforts. I like his material for second place.

Donald Parsley is getting a lot of publicity these days with his new book on Bust Half Dollar varieties. He doesn't need the glory, but for the very same reason Mark won #2 spot, Don wins #3 spot. His is a very comprehensive compilation of another fascinating subject -- Double Profile Bust Halves.

Even the Early American Dimes and David Davis gets an honorable mention (my #4 slot) with his article, The Pleasures and Perils of Bidding at Auction. It is a most interesting article.

That leaves four other votes listed by me and a couple additional votes not even listed, all of which represent informative articles and studies that have enriched my numismatic education. I wish to say, to one and all, thank you very much.

G.H.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the editor, David J. Davis for his kind words on my article JOHN REICH AND HIS "MISTRESS" ON THE CAPPED BUST HALVES. More importantly, I would like to thank him for sending a copy of my article to Stewart A. Witham. David is absolutely correct in that I had no idea that Stew had done so much research on John Reich and his life. If only I had a copy of his 1967 'Numismatic Scrapbook' article, I would have known; but of course, I didn't

I read Stewart Witham's 1967 article with great interest when he stated that the die that was used to strike the 1817/13 variety had the date punched on the working die in 1813 but not the stars when it was first set aside unused. I imagine there must have been a good reason for punching only the date, but not the stars. Or was that a common practice? And I guess I was wrong when I speculated that the entire die was prepared by Robert Scot after Reich left the Mint, first punching an 1813 date by mistake and then correcting it by punching a 7 over the 3.

Additionally, I would like to say 'thank you very much' to Stew for his informative comments on my article. It was enlightening and rewarding to learn the answers to many of my questions. With my limited writing talent and my busy schedule as a commissioned officer in the United States Navy, I would not even dream of writing the book about Johann Mathias Reich. But if I am ever offered the opportunity and the materials, I would love to conduct the proper research and write a few short articles on Reich and his short tenure at the U.S. Mint.

Chuck L. Louie

Just wanted to mention to you how pleased I was that my letter which appeared in Vol.5 No.1 of the **JR Journal** generated so much interest. I found the subsequent articles dealing with John Reich to be very informative.

If I could digress for a moment, I think the bottom line of all of this (as corny as it may sound) is primarily to have fun. As a result of my collecting I have met some very interesting people. One anecdote I enjoy telling is about a gentleman from North Carolina. He is a Doctor who was introduced to me by a local friend. The Doctor was selling his bust half dollar collection. We spoke on the phone and had a rather lengthy conversation about bust halves. Near the end of our talk he indicated that trying to attribute halves by Overton drove him crazy. The good Doctor said, "I would rather do brain surgery than identify die varieties." I told him I understood what he was saying, however that was not really true. It seems he was a brain surgeon, and I am not!

David Bruckner

For Don Parsley, one sincere vote of thanks for his work on the updated Overton. I've had a hard time putting the volume down since it arrived a week ago. One area of the book concerns me, however, and that is the pictorial grading guide.

As all veteran collectors know, there is another meaning for "commercial grading" than the one discussed on page 633 -- bluntly put, loose grading, as the antithesis of strict grading. I fear that the grading guide as presented draws too heavily from that kind of grading.

Some examples: Where Walter Breen characterizes an Extremely Fine example of the 1801-1807 design as having "all drapery lines complete to junction with curls; few isolated tiny rubbed spots only; generally, over half mint lustre (Breen's Encyclopedia, page 377), here "mint lustre may or may not be present among the stars with remainder of coin surface dulled" (page 650) -- does even the EF-45 illustrated on page 649 "make EF" by Breen's admittedly - strict criteria?

Again, compare the VG-8 1797 on page 646 with the VG-8 1805 on page 652 -- just the shared obverses. If this isn't an example of the old dealer's euphemism, VG for coin," I don't know what is. Scarcity or high price alone should not "bump" the coin by a grade or more.

Finally, in at least one case, this grading perspective spills over into the text itself -- I refer to the 1817/4, called extremely fine" in the description of its discovery, when it appears to fall short of the VF-30 standard illustrated on page 656. In this case, the coin in the grading guide appears to be a reasonable representative of the grade.

I'm not suggesting that there aren't plenty of dealers out there operating by the grading standards illustrated in this guide; but at the ever-advancing prices for all choice early U.S. material, it behooves the educated collector to demand a higher standard for his or her collecting dollar than the one depicted herein.

Harry Salyards

As usual, when "the **Journal**" arrived, I dropped everything and did my preliminary run-through. I am now in the process of doing my thorough study - but want to take time to get this off to you - along with my ballot and dues.

My only regrets in regard the **Journal** is that I wish it came twice as often and was twice as long! I know - it's up to those of us who are members to contribute, and I am at fault on that count. My personal problem is that I enjoy the process of gathering information & data so much that I resist saying I'm finished.

It must have been very exciting to actually handle a die - even if it was counterfeit. What bust half nut doesn't dream of a real die pair?

On the bust half nut subject - what would be your estimate of 'crossover' membership from BHNC to **JRCS**? I know it is heavy - but how nearly complete? With continuing additions to BHNC membership - and admission of dealers seems sure to increase it further - it appears to me that BHNC will shortly be reaching a point requiring some hard decisions as to the future. Has any thought ever been given to a **JRCS** - BHNC 'alliance' of sorts, in a formal way? It would seem to me to have some distinct advantages.

The **Journal** is GREAT - congratulations.

Phil Evans

This is just a quick note to let you know I appreciate the good job you are doing as Editor. I'm sure you catch flak over the late publishing of the **Journal** but anyone who has ever tried publishing knows the massive effort involved. Anyway, I hope you continue as Editor; keep up the good work.

I'm working on a short article for the **Journal** on the defective "T" punch used on some of the large sized bust quarters (1815-1825). As soon as I take the photographs I will send it in.

Bill Bugert

Here is an advanced Capped Bust Dime trivia question that the readers might enjoy, and get their minds off of half dollars for a minute or two:

On which Capped Bust Half Dime variety can one actually "READ" the date on the reverse?

Clue 1: Check your 1812 O-107 half dollars, as a similar phenomenon occurred.

Clue 2: The reverse die was used on only one known marriage.

(This limits the possibilities to eleven varieties.)

Although there could be a number of correct answers, I know of only one. However, I'd be delighted to hear of others

I just hope that I can get a good close-up photo to prove my answer. (I do have two good witnesses, and one is a **JRCS** member.) I've tried, and the photo will be very difficult. If I cannot get a good picture, I'll submit a photo with an added-on diagram for inclusion in the next issue.

Mark Smith

Die Deterioration of a 1798 Dollar (B-28 Reverse)

That the hand engraved dies for early federal coinage suffered frequent damage is attested to by the surviving coinage. Evidence of die breaks is not surprising, and especially on reverses, since these early dies were generally used long after early machine engraved dies in comparable conditions would have been removed from service.

The series of photos here depicts five reverse die stages of the 1798 B-28 dollar. The most remarkable characteristic is the area below the left border of the shield between the eagle's arrow clutching talon and tail feather.

The earliest of the die stages shown here, and labelled B-28a, doesn't hint at the die disaster that lies ahead. However, B-28b gives clear evidence of the two parallel-like breaks. Both reach from the coin's edge; one to the upper portion of the complete talon and the other, about the arrow ends, to the shield border. There is also a break that begins at the lower rim, crosses the U, passes through the base of N to the tip of an arrow, to the tip of the second feather below the banner.

Die damage is extensive in B-28c. It is useful to begin to number the breaks in a clockwise fashion. Begin with the right side of the parallel-like break, at the immediate left of the right tail feather, as the first break. Its mate, from rim to talon is called the second break and the one crossing the U is called the third break. The damage from the first and second breaks cross the shield border and a small portion of the die appears to be missing. In addition, a fourth break appears from the rim over U through the top of N downward through ITE, under D, to the wing and to the bottom of ST through the next A to the left top and, finally, to the rim above the next T. A fifth break evident on B-28c runs from the center of O through F on through the wing end along the bottom of AM upward through ERIC to the rim over the next A. A sixth break appears from the rim below the leaf stem through the center of the nearest A. Finally, a seventh break is evident as a tiny segment from the stem to the claw to the leaf.

To digress, the four additional die cracks on B-28c that were not evident on our B-28b suggest that coinage exhibiting intermediate die stages was probably struck. The designations here of stages as a, b, c, d, and e is for convenience, not permanence, and is subject to change. The reverse die was used only for the B-28 variety as far as is known. B-28 is a common variety among some thirty others that have been

identified in this peak year of bust dollar coinage. It is likely that interesting examples of other die stages exist. The author will welcome learning of them.

In our B-28d, die deterioration has advanced somewhat further along the lines charted in B-28c. A somewhat larger piece of the die from the parallel-like cracks to the arrows now appears to be missing. Probably B-28d was struck not long after B-28c.

This failing reverse die continued in service to strike B-28e. The example here appears to be a lower grade. Partly this probably represents the low quality of strike. But, also, it circulated well and perhaps survived as an oddity because of the unusual smooth section that is clearly raised above nearby design devices. The substantial loss of die surface is such that the coin does not stack properly. An eighth break appears from the tip of a central arrow to the fourth feather. The third break, first evident in B-28b and reaching to the banner there, has now crossed the banner at P, passing through the left-most star and reaching to the second cloud from the left.

The weakness of the central stars is evident with little change on each of the reverse die stages illustrated. Such weakness is common in the early dollar series. A plausible explanation for such weaknesses is that they arise on the opposite face of bold coinage design features. Such bold features command relatively large planchet volumes, often leaving less metal than a full strike requires on the opposite side of the planchet. A discussion of this phenomenon appears in Jules Reiver's "Variety Identification Manual for United States Quarter Dollars, 1796-1839".

Finally, a useful way to catalog die stages, devised by Jules Reiver, follows:

	<u>a</u>	<u>b</u>	<u>c</u>	<u>d</u>	<u>e</u>
No defects	x				
Parallel cracks at left of tail feathers		x	x	x	x
Rim thru U to N to arrow to second feather		x	x	x	x
Rim over U thru NITE to wing to STA			x	x	x
O thru F to AMERIC to rim			x	x	x
Rim below stem thru nearest A			x	x	x
Stem to claw to leaf			x	x	x
Smaller missing piece of die evident			x	x	x
Larger missing piece of die evident				x	x
From center arrow tip to fourth wing feather					x
Missing lump of die from parallel crack					x

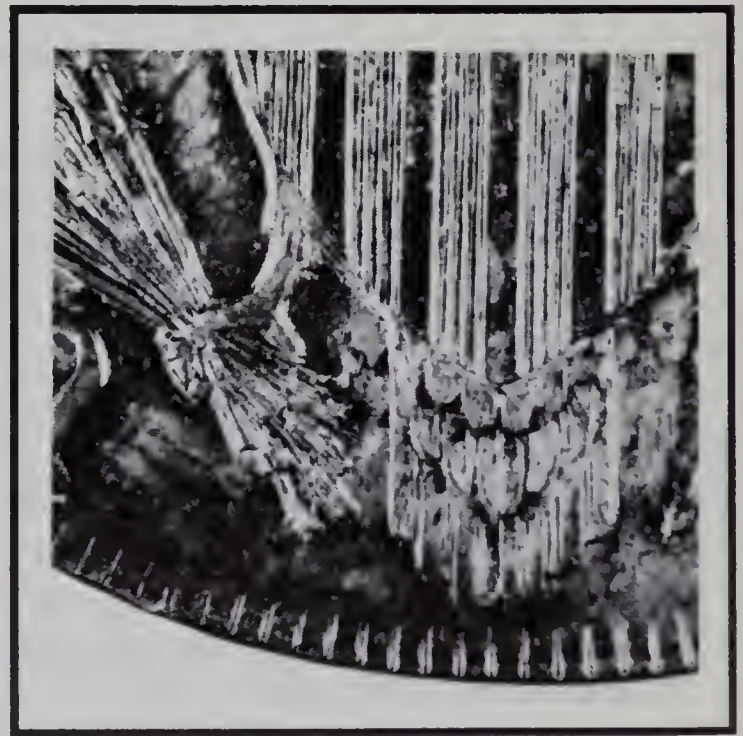
Robert M. Stark

Acknowledgement

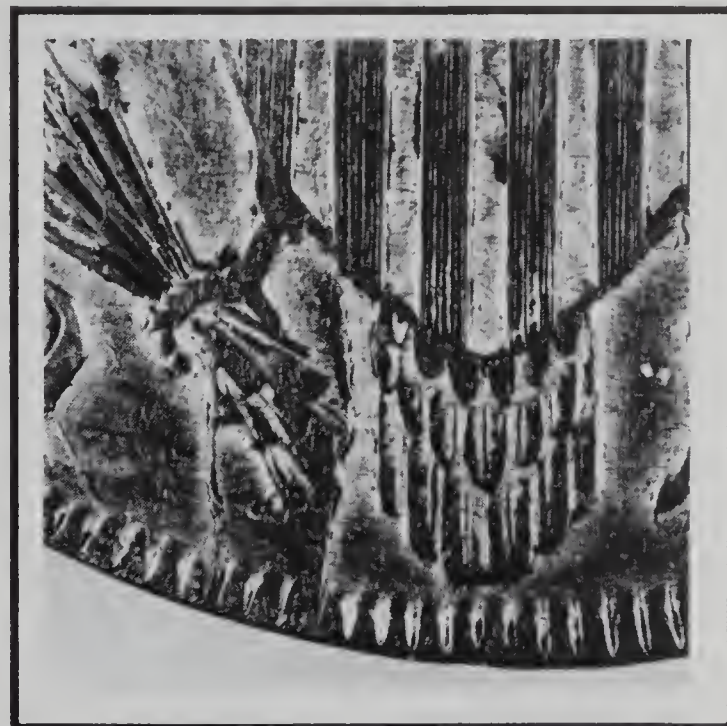
It is a pleasure to gratefully acknowledge the substantial assistance of Jules Reiver of Wilmington, Delaware.



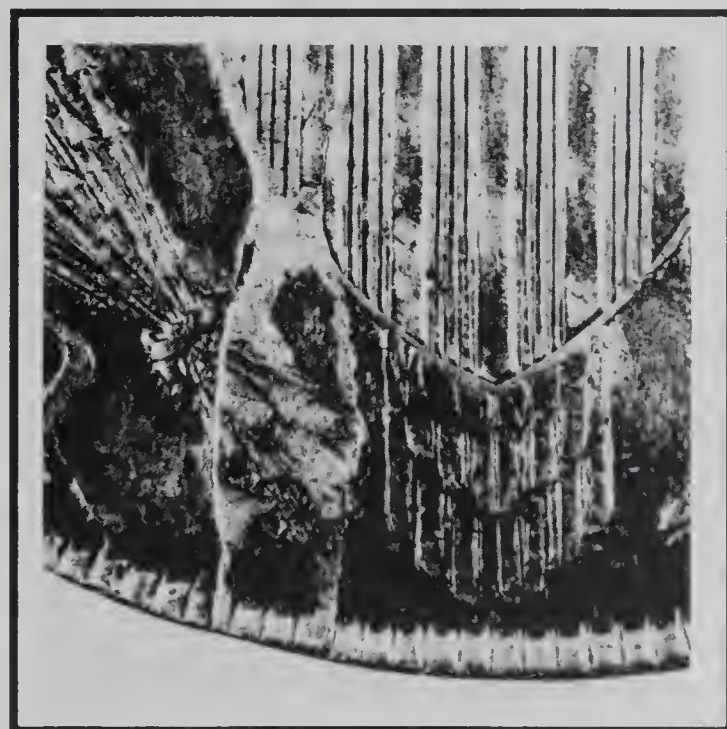
Obverse of 1798 Dollar B-28a



1798 Dollar B-28a



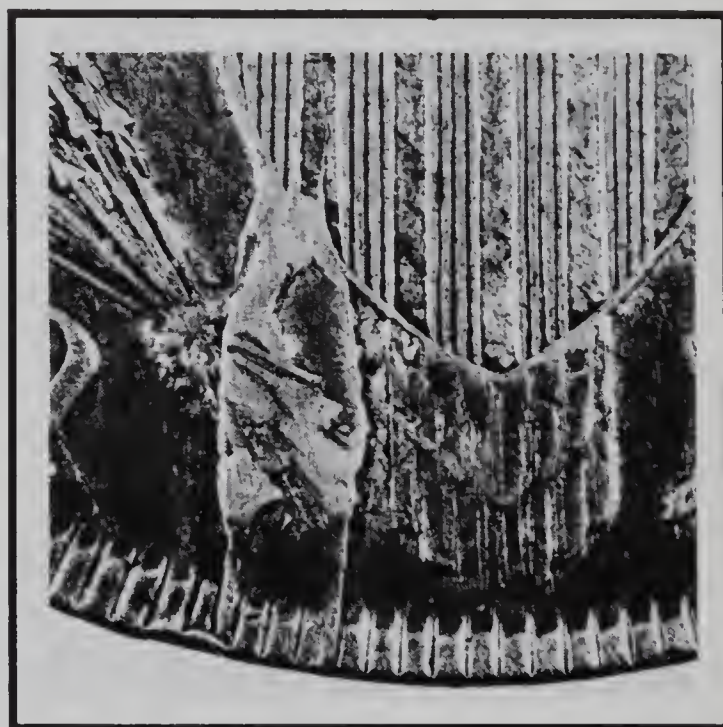
1798 Dollar B-28b



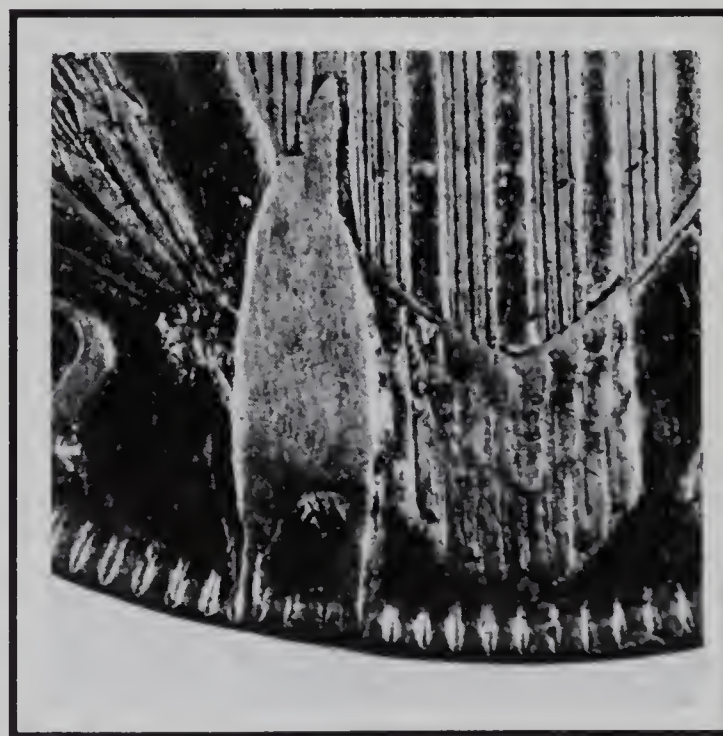
1798 Dollar B-28c



1798 Dollar B-28d



1798 Dollar B-28e



Working Die Preparation for the Lettered Edge Series of United States Half Dollars

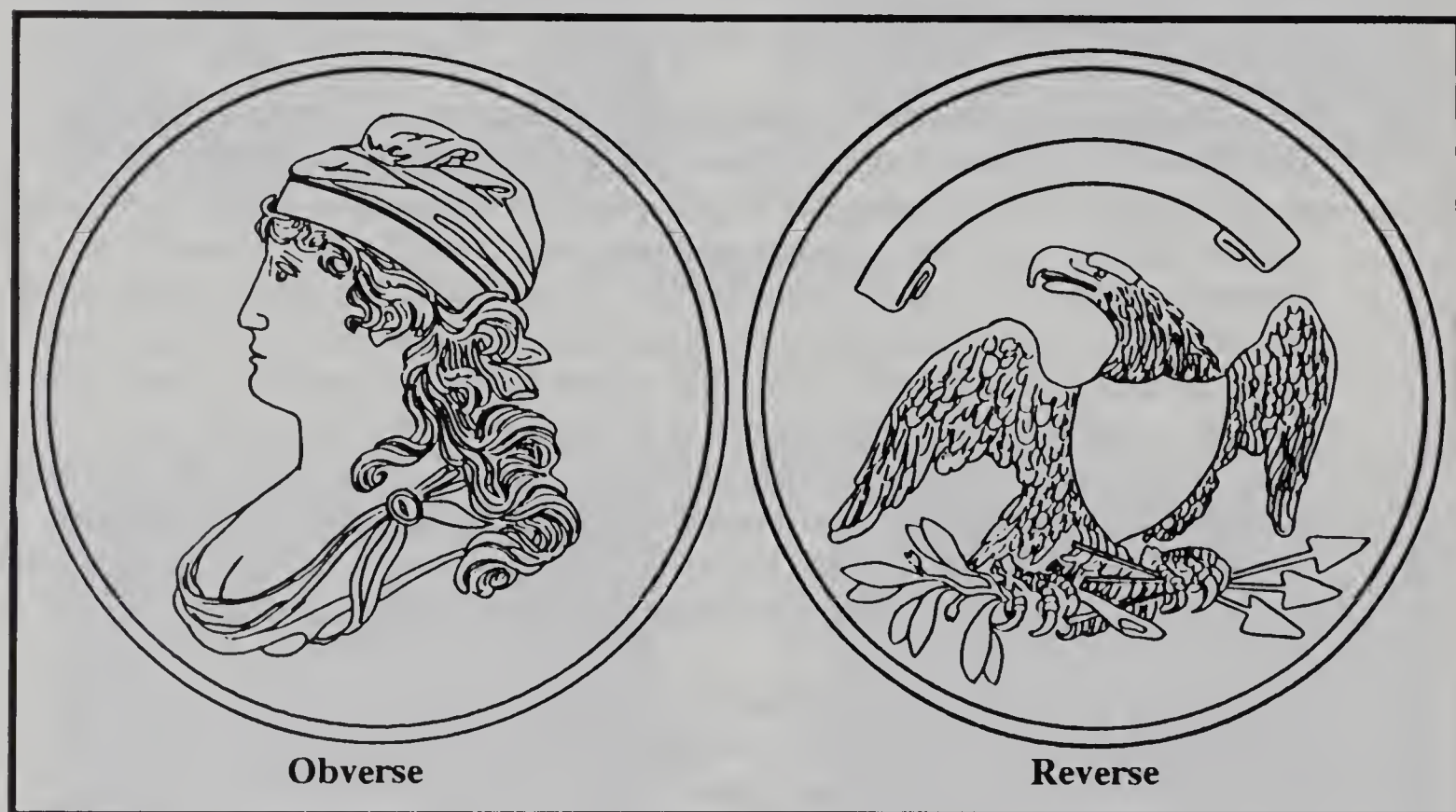
Die variety collectors of the turban head series of the lettered edge half dollars are well aware of the subtle differences between the various die varieties of each date. These subtle differences were produced because of the individual hand finishing operations required to prepare the completed working dies. This short article on working die preparation is directed toward the capped bust or turban head series of United States half dollars. The procedure, however, can be extrapolated to all of the early denominations of early United States coinage.

The working die was started by cutting a piece of tool steel and shaping it to the general overall dimensions of the finished die. Since the coining presses were used for all denominations of coinage, it is quite probable that a single rod diameter was used for all dies. The head, or image containing end, would be ground smaller or reduced in diameter in a lathe for the smaller coinage, while the larger coins required an enlargement or mushrooming of the image end. This special alloy tool steel was softened or heat treated so that it could be worked as easily as possible. The tool steel used for the preparation of working dies in the early days of the mint was quite valuable. This steel had to be of high quality and properly prepared in order to ensure its metallurgical composition and strength so that the striking pressures would not cause premature failure of the die. It is estimated that a completed set of working dies cost \$34 to prepare. This was a large amount of money for the fledgling mint.

Once the die had been properly shaped, the impression from the master die was transferred to the working die. This process was probably accomplished by heating the working die face and impressing the cool case-hardened master die into its surface. This transfer process could not transfer all of the required detail, especially the details at the outer edges of the coin design. The pressure that would have been required to transfer all of the finished coin detail would have resulted in a distorted die, even if the detail would have transferred. It would also have been much easier to punch the stars and letters into the working die rather than having to cut or engrave them into the master die. The master die, therefore, contained only the central or major device. The obverse contained the bust while the reverse contained the eagle. All the remaining details of the "approved design" were added to each of the individual working dies by hand.

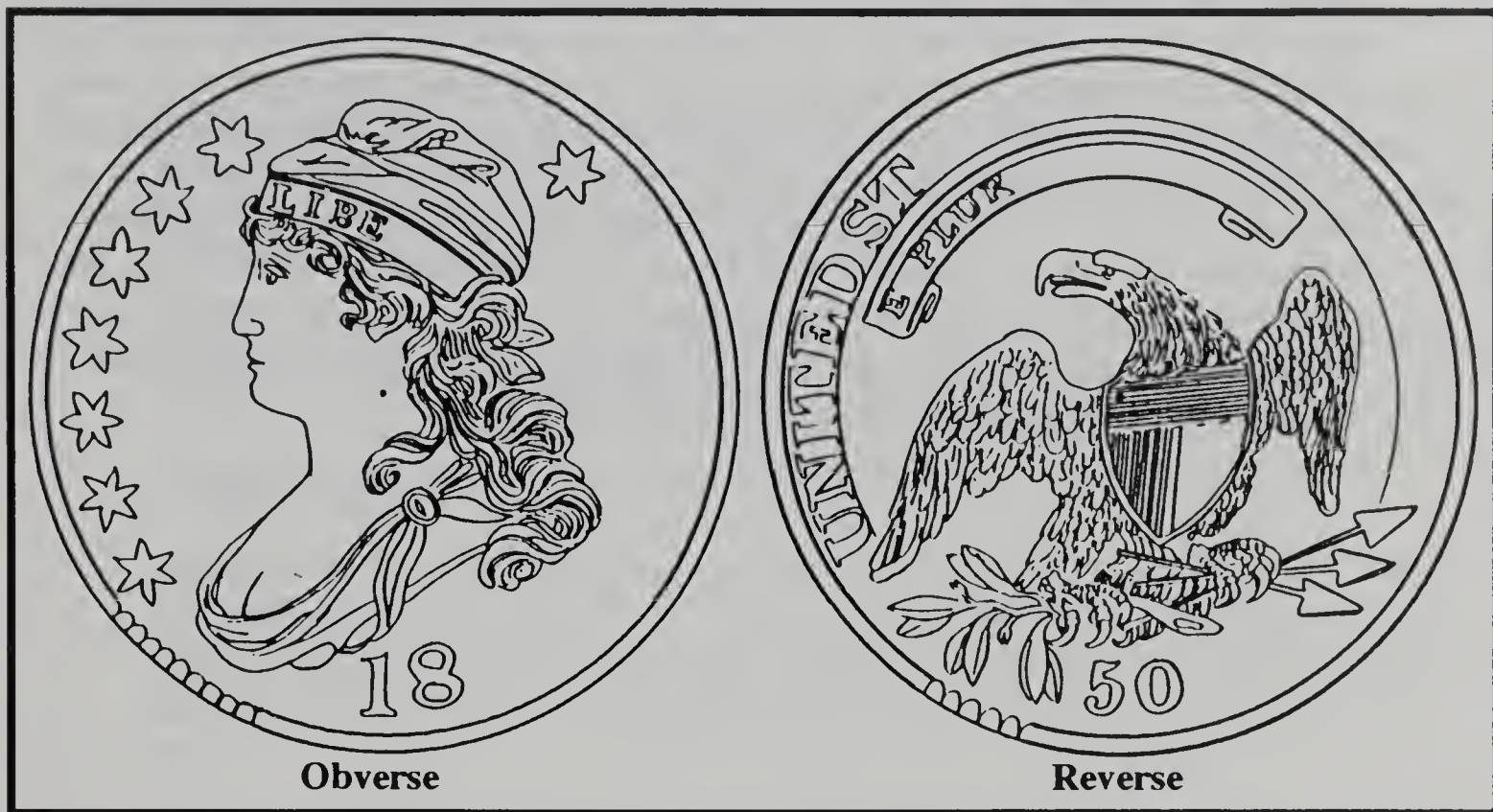
The obverse details, which were hand work, included the thirteen stars around the periphery, the date and very probably the letters on the headband. The reverse details which were added by hand were the letters around the periphery, the letters on the scroll, the denomination 50 C., and the stripes and lines in the shield. Many of the reverses also show reworking or tooling on the arrowheads, arrow shafts and olive leaves. This reworking or engraving was probably done to enhance the detail which was impressed into the working die from the master die. The segments of the milling on the obverse and reverse were hand tooled as well. It is my belief that punches were used to create the stars, letters and numbers while graving tools were used to create all other devices.

The first illustration shows the obverse and reverse of the working die with the detail transferred from the master die.



The second illustration shows the obverse and reverse of the working dies with the punching and hand engraving incomplete but underway. As you can see from the second illustration, the engraver used scribed guide lines encircling the reverse and possible the obverse as a guide for the punching of the stars and letters. These scribe lines were circular scribed using the "center dot" as the central point of the radius. This is why the center dot shows up on so many completed working dies. These scribed lines were removed as the die was polished and lapped smooth during final finishing operations. On many of the completed working dies the scribed lines were

not completely removed and can be seen above and/or below the letters, especially on the reverse. Many times the “joined” letters referred to in the Overton book are actually scribe lines not removed.



The final set of illustrations show the working dies completely engraved and finished and ready to be annealed.



The annealing process involved repeated heating and cooling of the completed die in order to harden the steel so the die would not distort when used to impress the design onto blank planchets. Careful, quality workmanship had to have been used when heat treating the finished working dies. If the temperature was elevated too high or quenching or cooling performed too rapidly, the steel would fracture, warp or become brittle. This brittleness can be seen on many die varieties as major cracks extending completely across the die. Stress cracks in the dies from work hardening during use, as well as from manufacture, occur most often around the periphery adjacent to the stars, letters or date, because of the sharp surface irregularities and stress induced when these devices were punched into the die. Once the planchets were struck, the coins were run through the Castaing machine to letter the edge. The Castaing machine consisted of a stationary die and a circular die on which were engraved the letters and star and other devices of the lettered edge series.

Don Parsley

Capped Bust Half Dollar Foil Impressions

Even those individuals who have been around coin collecting for a length of time, are often awed when confronted with a carefully prepared foil coin impression. There is just something about them. Perhaps it is because, if done skillfully, the impressions themselves become small detailed works of art.

Over the years serious collectors and museum curators have tried various methods of creating reference copies of their coins. Plaster models were/are a favorite of many of the older museum collections. Other methods implemented in the past, with various degrees of success, have been paper rubbings and wax impressions.

And yet, it is the opinion of many professional numismatists and this writer, that if a foil impression is created with care, then no other form of duplication even comes close. The problem is, until now, most that know the process have learned it from a more learned collector and very little on the subject has been written in “how to” form.

Foil impressions have been known to the hobby of coin collecting for many years. Members of the EAC (Early American Coppers Club) and BHNC (Bust Half Nut Club) have used foil impression methods for study of specific varieties and exchange between members. Indeed, foil “tin” shells (impressions) supposedly go back to the old screwpress times.

Importantly, one of the founders of the foil impression (at least as far as experimentation with numbers of coins is concerned) was Paul Bedoudian. Bedoudian made impressions of 15,000 coins for illustrative purposes in his book “Coinage of Cilician Armenia.”

Mr. Bedoudian’s method was to press the coin between a folded aluminum foil rectangle using a modified Notary or Corporate Seal hand press. Using a rubber disk (glued to the upper seal) and a rubber disk (secured on a flat plate as the bottom “die”), he was able to prepare one hundred impressions an hour.

Today, little has changed in the creation process of foil impressions. Still, I believe that with the ever increasing problem of individual and home theft and the resurgence of the numismatic researcher on the scene, the foil impression is making a tremendous

“comeback.” And when you see your first quality impression, you too will know why.

The impression, after all, gives you the opportunity to “have your collection home” of sorts, while still enabling you to keep your collection safely tucked away in a bank vault—where it belongs. Also, if you are “into” the study of Capped Bust half dollar varieties, then you can have a representative example of your actual coin on hand for study, complete with die crack, die clashes and all. Further, these “safe” impressions can be carried with you to coin shows or conventions to share with collectors with like interests, or sent through the mail (non-registered!) for fellow collectors to study without the fear of loss or damage of a rare or scarce coin. Besides, once you gain a little experience making foil impressions they become simply “neat” things to make.

Modifying the Press

If you have been involved with collecting coins for some time then you may possibly know someone with a converted press for sale at a reasonable price (\$30.00 to \$65.00). However, you do not have to be a genius with tools to modify your own notary press and this often adds to the enjoyment of creating the impressions.

The first thing needed is a notary or corporate seal press and these are considered by many to be “antiques” in themselves. Most often they measure ten to twelve inches in height and are about five inches long and about two inches wide. (See illustration). Most all have a black enamel-type finish. Presses like these can be obtained from antique shops, anywhere from the \$15.00 to \$50.00 range. Another occasional outlet that you might wish to check out is the flea-market sale (presses have sold for as little as \$5.00). Still another outlet is the resale or old junk shop. Believe me, if persistent and willing to make a few phone calls or do a little “Sunday driving”, then one (or more) will turn up.

Once the press has been acquired the next thing necessary is conversion. You must remove the lower (usually the softer metal) half of the seal. The reason for this is that if you do not remove the lower half of the seal before you try to press the rubber, foil, and coin then there will not be enough room for everything. The clearance is simply too small.

The lower seal is held in place by a hardened, onetime molten, metal/solder. Turn the press on its side (bottom facing you), and either heat the metal with a propane torch until the metal flows and the seal pulls free, or drill a dozen or so small holes and then using a screwdriver carefully pry the metal until the lower seal can be pushed out of the press. Both methods work. Also, grabbing the sides of the lower seal with a pair of “channel-lock” pliers and then twisting often helps to free the

lower seal as well. It is probable that I am making this sound more difficult than it really is, as the entire removal process should take no more than ten or twenty minutes. If you really want to get “fancy” (and have experience grinding metal) then you could shave down the upper seal’s thickness to give you additional working space, although this is a personal convenience and not really necessary.

Next secure a small piece of flat 1/16-inch plate aluminum. Either have it cut or cut it yourself to 2-1/2 inches by 3 inches. Round the sharp corners with a file and bend up the edge 1/2 inch (clamp it in a vise), so that when finished the plate is 2-1/2 by 2-1/2 inches. You can skip the bent edge step if you like, but it does give you a



“handle” of sorts to hold onto when removing the coin and foil impression from the press.

The last step in our press conversion is the attachment of the rubber “dies” which will press against the foil to make the actual impression. There are two types of rubber that I have found works well--depending upon the types (or grades) of your coins.

If your coins are normal average grade pieces then use tire patch rubber (not thin tire patch vinyl). Us older timer's still remember the patch kit with the cardboard can and metal topped cover/“scuffer”. Older gas stations and neighborhood hardware stores sometimes have this kit laying around gathering dust.

If your coins are high relief or higher grade (more detailed) then use 1/16 or 1/8-inch rubber gasket material—available at most hardware and auto parts stores for about one dollar.

Attach the rubber to the top of the removable aluminum plate using silicone bathtub sealer. Smooth the sealer level on the plate before sticking the rubber down. Let the silicone dry and then, using a sharp knife or razor blade, trim the rubber to match the edges of the plate. Take another piece of rubber and hold it up to the bottom of the still intact upper seal. Trace around the seal using an ink marker, then remove and trim the rubber with scissors or a sharp knife. Once trimmed permanently silicone the disk to the upper seal and allow drying time for the sealer to “cure.” We are now ready to make our coin impressions. Aren't you “impressed” with yourself?

Preparing the Foil

If your coins are lower grade or very low relief then use normal thickness aluminum foil as this will give you a better impression. However, as a general rule, use “Heavy Duty” foil in most all other instances. Thanks to Mr. Bedoudian's research, and that of others, we also know that we should place the “bright” side of the foil inward (that is resting against the coin). The impression will be more eye pleasing this way.

Cut the foil into small rectangles of approximately 1-1/2 by 3 inches. A quick way to “cut” the foil is by placing a small ruler along the desired line and then simply pulling the aluminum up at an angle. With minimum practice the aluminum foil tears perfectly.

Now that we have our little aluminum rectangles we are nearly ready, however, one more step needs to be accomplished. You will undoubtedly have noticed that all that messing with the foil has caused it to dent, crease or even fold. We need to get these imperfections out. To do this we place the foil on a suitable clean flat surface

(a glass surface or counter-top works great). Then using a small piece of soft cloth (while holding the edges of the foil with one hand), gently rub the foil in one direction, thus removing any imperfections.

The Step-by-Step Process

With a supply of flat foils ready, take your ruler and lay it across the middle of a foil and crease it (so it will be easy to fold over the coin).

1. Lay the foil on the bottom rubber plate.
2. Place the half (holding it by its edges) on the aluminum foil being careful not to drop the coin.
3. Fold the (pre)folded foil over the half and insert the bottom plate into the press.
4. Center the coin/foil and slowly but firmly bring down the handle of the press. Usually a single impression is all that is required.
5. Remove the lower aluminum plate, half, and foil impression.
6. Gently open the foil enough to remove the coin (you should practice this with common pocket change first to get a feel for it).
7. Place the obverse/reverse impression in a two piece Whitman clear plastic (dollar size), coin holder. Snap the holder shut and your impression is now safe for general handling as well as the U.S. Mail.

Note: This last step with the plastic holder is very important. First, it totally protects your impressions from damage and it makes it easy to store them in 2 X 2 boxes. Secondly, if you correspond with other collectors or otherwise have a need to send one through the mail, you can rest assured it will get where it is going without being flattened. I have had fellow collectors send me impressions (unprotected) that became so flattened in the mailing process that I could not even tell you what type of coin the impression was made from.

Tip: If you find that the foil sometimes “sticks” to the rubber after pressing, then you can eliminate this problem by lightly dusting your “dies” with baby powder.

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Overton's Third Edition: A Review

Searching for bust halves in the early 1960's was something of a mixed blessing. Granted, they were inexpensive by comparison to today's prices. But even with the most meticulous notes, one was never sure of a new marriage until he was back home with the reference collection close at hand. Part of my problem then was that I collected bust halves in circulated grades and would only indicate "have" or "have not" on my want list. The frequent purchase of a duplicate (unknowingly) was my method of upgrading. The M. L. Beistle book, A Register of Half Dollar Die Varieties and Sub-Varieties, was the bible. If you ever thought that you had completed the 1835's you were crazy, because there were 11 different varieties according to Beistle in 1929, and only 10 today! Overton's first edition listed two varieties not listed in Beistle and his second edition included two more marriages not listed in the first edition. Needless to say, Overton's revised edition (1970) was a welcome reference which provided untold hours of collecting enjoyment for the next generation of collectors.

A reference catalog's main objective is to achieve a sense of order from chaos. Overton's second edition was successful in doing that for the bust halves. The second purpose of a reference book is to incorporate all of the recently published information within its covers and to present the material in an intelligent and comprehensible manner.

The reviewer notices that Don Parsley starts his introduction by defending his father-in-law's (Al Overton) judgment and rejecting new information and documentation about the series. He justifies his position by saying he believes that a new numbering system would create turmoil and confusion and accomplish little benefit in the long run. But in the 21 years since Overton's second edition was published, more has been learned and written about bust halves than in the 41 years between publication of Beistle's half dollar book and Overton's second edition. Did that stop Al from developing a numbering system different from Beistle's? Certainly not.

By rejecting the emission order techniques that have been established and published by Ivan Leaman and Don Gunnet, Mr. Parsley has limited the scope of the third edition to a mere fraction of the expectations of the serious student. The editor also seems to discredit the importance of the edge of the coin by not only misspelling "Castaing" on numerous occasions but also by referring to the denticles as "milling" or "segments" throughout the entire book.

The text description for each marriage is essentially the same as it was in the second edition. Little effort was made to embellish Al's abbreviated descriptions or to provide additional diagnostics to help attribute a bustie. There are no quick finding charts or other available and useful new techniques to help attribute a half dollar.

What would have been most beneficial to collectors would have been additional diagnostic characteristics for the R5+ marriages, i.e., 1794 O-110: no berry at S1; 1812 O-101: Stars 4 & 5 very close; 1827 O-124: C2 recut; or that the inner curl of 2 points to 12 o'clock on the 1825 O-109 and the same curl tip points to 2 o'clock on the O-110. The notable exception was 1836 O-121 where Don mentions the tail feathers extend between the olive branches. These details are invaluable.

Confusion still reigns in 1795. Overton varieties 118 and 132 are still listed [the O-132 even has a photograph! (the reverse photo looks like the same one used for 1795 O-101)] although no examples are known today.

If the identification of sub-varieties was the objective of the third edition, the EDS of 1807 O-110 with no die cracks, the LDS of 1827 O-114 with no denticles and stars heavily drawn to rim and A-A apart, as well as the 1828 O-123 with no obverse rim break and no railroad tracks on the reverse, just to name a few, should have been included. Other numerous sub-varieties made their debut in this third edition. Some of them are major new die states (such as 1813 O-105a) which deserve recognition. Others such as the 1827 O-148a with a different edge die, are totally inconsistent with Parsley's own guidelines.

The photographs in this book are remarkable. We are grateful for the effort that was expended to obtain quality illustrations. It is without question the photographs that make this book. Each photograph has been screened at 32,400 dots per square inch and is twice life size. In comparison, the old second edition was screened at only 22,500 dots per square inch and the photos were only full size. The effect of these excellent photo reproductions is worth the price of the book. In addition to this, Parsley used the edge mirror to photograph a few edges (the third die) in the appendix.

And finally if one is to write a definitive book on bust halves, he should at least mention the 1822 AW-34 uniface, the platinum strikings of 1814-107, the crushed lettered edge proofs of 1833-36, and finally the marriages known in proof. All of these were contemporary products of the Mint and play a vital part in the on-going saga of collecting bust half dollars. It is too bad none of them appear in Early Half Dollar Die Varieites 1794-1836, Third Edition, the "green bible" for bust half nuts.

R. Logan

A Sort of Homecoming

A few of the membership, in fact, very few I'm sure, may recognize the above title as the name of a song by the Irish Rock Group, U-2. In this instance, it takes on a somewhat different meaning.

On Thanksgiving Day, immediately after dinner, I left my home in New Jersey and set out for Michigan. The purpose of my trip was to meet, for the first time, a fellow JRCS member with whom I had been corresponding for over two years.

I arrived on Friday afternoon and immediately the conversation turned to Capped Bust Half Dollars. The discussion continued well into the following morning. Saturday morning brought us to the event we had been looking forward to for several months, "SHOWTIME".

The bourse floor at the Hyatt Regency in Dearborn was twice the size of the major shows in New Jersey, much more than I had expected. Our intention was to first tour the floor together and then go our separate ways. This very sound idea did not last very long, as my heart was stopped by an 1830 O-123 in EF-45, original color and problem free, which I purchased for \$70.00. This was to happen many times over the next five hours. Between my friend and I we took 19 bust halves from the floor. Not a bad day by any standard.

Later that evening while attributing our coins we took a short break and went back to the over 30 bust halves I had taken with me and those he had on hand. Very shortly we moved to 1812/11 O-102. We compared strike, die cracks, clashmarks and die states on both coins and came to the conclusion that the two coins were struck within approximately a few hundred coins of each other.

What we had was two collectors who met for the first time and two bust halves that were struck 178 years earlier. We wondered if, perhaps, they had ever been side by side for a short time before they began their travel through our past. For a few days they were reunited on a kitchen table in Michigan. Truly..."A Sort of Homecoming".

Leonard Schramm

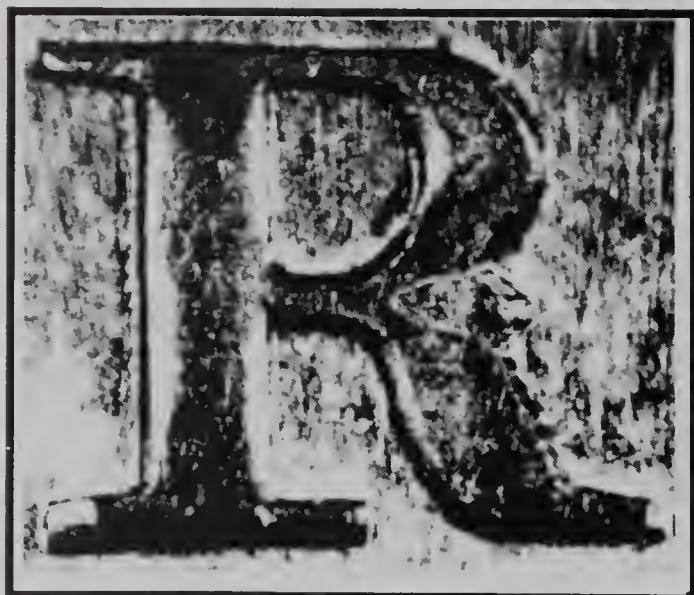


1812/11 O-102

Use of the Strengthening Punch

It is so easy to get fixed ideas about coins. One of mine was that the patched 3's on the 1823 O-101 and O-110 were the only examples of a punch having been used to strengthen letters or numbers. Now another one crops up, and it may be general knowledge, but may not.

Don Harms sent a coin to be checked. It is a gorgeous 1822 O-106, graded by NGC as MS65. NGC called it 1822/1, which is one of the things Don wanted checked.



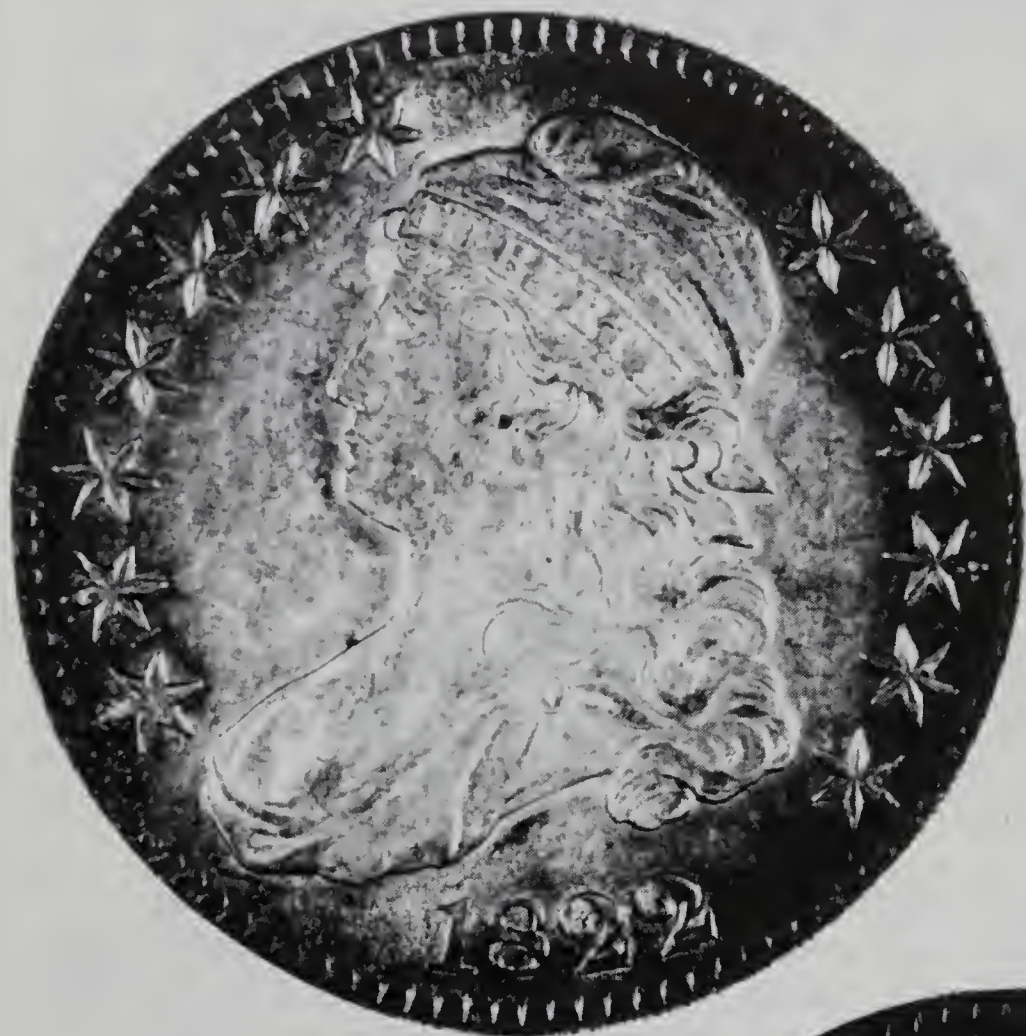
In Walter Breen's **Encyclopedia** the 1822 half dollar overdates are given as O-101 and O-106, with NUMISMA given as the source. The only evidence of a possible overdate on Don's coin was a tiny lump inside the right bottom of the second 2, but this is so far to the right that it doesn't seem possible for it to be from a 1, so it probably is not an overdate.

In checking five examples, however, there seemed to be a difference. On three of the coins the tail of the R in AMERICA is almost not connected to the loop of the R. On the other two the junction of the tail and the loop has been strengthened with the same sort of punch used to strengthen 1823 O-101a, the "patched 3" and 1823 O-110a, the "ugly 3".

Since three of the coins had weak R's, I call them the earliest die states. The one with the strengthened R should be the next state, and the one with cracks on both the obverse and the reverse, along with the strengthened R, the latest state.

Comments on this or any other use of the strengthening punch will be appreciated. I feel that the information about the fact that the 1822 O-106 has both the broken R and the strengthened R is probably known to many half dollar collectors, but I don't recall having seen it in print.

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1822 O-106



GETTING BACK INTO COINS; Or, Trying to Get My Feet Wet Without Taking a Complete Bath

This is a very personal essay. I write it as commentary on William Atkinson's "Capped Bust Half Dollars - Collecting Options" (JR Journal Vol.4, No.3), an essay obviously meant to encourage collectors of Bust Halves, and want to couple it with Brad Karoloff's "1812 O-107 Capped Bust Half Die State Study," in the same issue. I suggest another approach to collecting Bust Halves, and ask for our reader's opinions, because the idea of the cost of expanding from a date set to an Overton set truly scares me off. And if it scares me off, I'm certain it scares others off as well.

Mine is an old story: I've never had a lot of money. Like many boys in our working-class neighborhood, I had a newspaper route. From about the age of ten to fifteen, coin collecting was a serious passion. I scrutinized all possible coins, from the change that passed through my hands to that in the cash registers in a half dozen small shops near our home. The 1950's were good years for finding Blue Book prizes in circulation, and I still remember the excitement of finding a 1913-S Variety II Buffalo nickel in almost uncirculated condition. One of my mother's friends gave me 1857 and 1858 Flying Eagles cents and a 1859 Indian Head cent which her mother had saved as a child. I couldn't afford to save silver dollars, halves, or even many quarters in those days. They added up to real money!

I began college in 1961. I would look at my Whitman folders perhaps twice a year, order the year's proof set from the mint, and scrutinize the change I received in getting through life. My coin collection, in its dusty cardboard box, was mostly a material reminder of my childhood. I left my collection with my mother when I began graduate study at the University of Virginia, then Colorado, Cambridge, Sheffield, and Colorado again. After ten years of graduate study, I took a position at the University of Colorado, where I remain. In 1978 I married Cathy, a beginning graduate student, who then spent a decade in graduate school. We have two daughters, aged six and ten.

About ten years ago I retrieved my coin collection. I sat on the sidelines and watched the boom and bust of the gold and silver markets and the crazy speculation in coins. I got back into collecting by buying the rarities I could not afford thirty years earlier: a 3-legged Buffalo nickel, a 1922-plain cent, a 1909-S VDB cent, etc. I can afford a few such luxuries, but at age 48, I hear the clock of mortality ticking. I'm aware that I will be 56 when my elder daughter begins college and 65 or more when my younger daughter graduates.

Of course, I'm putting a little money aside towards their educations, but Cathy has not yet landed a regular university appointment. As a result, I must think very seriously before plunking much money into a hobby, however fascinating.

I have attempted to recognize "where I am" in life, and so what I've done is to combine the collecting impulse with what I do for a living -- the study of the meanings of artifacts in cultures. I've always liked cents, but I do not collect cents generally. Instead, I've invented a little project which I call "the making of the modern cent." I collect pattern cents, and I have a growing collection from the early 1850's through the 1860's. I specialize in 1858, the year in which the mint "sold" the Indian cent to Congress. I prefer the Flying Eagles, the so-called "turkey head" in particular. Such coins -- true rarities -- I collect in any condition, whether holed, worn, or whizzed. Although a Proof-65 pattern is beautiful, I can be equally excited about a Gd-4 or a holed VF-20. That some patterns circulated or that certain people saved them is far more revealing of our culture, and more exciting to me than simply plugging a hole in a board with an 1856 Flying Eagle, a rather common pattern which was later restruck.

I am presently trying to "get into" Capped Bust Halves seriously after fiddling with them for several years. In terms of aesthetics, I'm very fond of John Reich's work. In Stu Keene's language, Bust Halves are a "neat" series. Because of the eyesight that goes with being 48, I really prefer AU-50 and above. In step with Atkinson's suggestion, I'm putting together a date set in AU-50+. I am concentrating on the early dates because I fear that their prices may escalate faster than my purchasing power. On the other hand, I can't ignore Overton varieties, but I know that I will never be able to directly compete with a Jules Reiver. There is, however, an alternative to an across the board extension of one's collection. I'm shopping for a year in which to specialize, collecting the Overton varieties of that year and also die states of a particular variety as Brad Karoleff seems to have done for the 1812 O-107. I have tentatively selected 1814 as the year and the 1814 O-108(a) as the variety. (I'd like to thank Stu Keene, Mark Hotz, and Jules Reiver for their helpful suggestions about an appropriate year and ask the readership of the **JR Journal** for additional suggestions and arguments: Write me at P.O. Box 3103, Boulder, CO 80307). While I try to learn enough to make this decision firm, I'm setting aside the money for a decent AU-50 1807 (Unless a Judd-206 "turkey head" pattern cent comes along first!).

The kind of specializing I suggest seems to be an interesting alternative to Atkinson's suggestion in that it could well result in a limited collection providing important specific information for the

Society as a whole. But even if it did not, it would provide a more achievable goal within the range of more pocketbooks. It could also make the more highly technical essays on die varieties of greater interest to more collectors.

One of the many topics I would like to learn more about is restrikes, counterfeits, etc. A decent dealer advertized a counterfeit 1815 half dollar in German silver: who made it? when? and why? I'm well aware that restrikes and counterfeits can strike terror into some, but, if they are a fact of collecting, they should be treated openly. I'd like to buy a good specimen. I probably should have purchased the 1815, but I didn't feel that I knew enough at the time. I would like to read a good article on the topic. Who will write such an article or series of articles?

Michael J. Preston

Michael's essay brings a lot of thoughts to my mind. Some of the things he says apply to a lot of collectors and I would like to add a short commentary.

He touches on a lot of the questions I hear at conventions, in letters and a few late night phone calls. The most frequent being, "What should I collect?" and "What condition should I collect them in?"

My usual reply is, "What are you looking for? If you are looking for the most rewarding, i.e. financial, try bust halves - there are more collectors paying for rarity; competition, try halves; the thrill of discovery, either new varieties or high rarity, try half dimes, etc."

Underlying any such discussion, of course, is how big is your budget? Where I come from, the thrill is in buying and adding new specimens. If I had deep pockets I would collect silver dollars, they are certainly the most impressive. Half dimes are the easiest to buy. There is no competition in gold, but they don't come cheap. Tough to find are the dimes and quarters.

Last, but not least, comes the argument about which condition to collect. Fines and Very Fines are easiest on the pocket book no matter what series you collect. The latter still have nice detail. A lot of collectors pick About Uncirculated as a goal. When comparing the price between AU and Extremely Fine, you can usually buy three or four of the latter for AU money in most series. A discriminating EF buyer will end up with a collection with almost as much detail, and EF coins come very pretty.

the EDITOR

CONDITION CENSUS

Capped Bust Half Dimes 1829-1837

Since we first published the Capped Bust Half Dime census two and one-half years ago (Vol.3, No.2/3), the number of active collectors reporting 80 or more die marriages has tripled. Another die marriage (1829 V-18) has been discovered and, needless to say, another generation has learned the joy of collecting bust half dimes by die variety.

The new generation not only thinks they discovered Cherry-Picking, but they have put a few of the old-timers to shame. The interest in bust half dime collecting is increasing exponentially with conscientious collectors willing to share their new knowledge with the numismatic fraternity. The timing seems to be right for a new book on bust half dimes. I am delighted to announce that John McCloskey has agreed to coauthor such a book with me. We are encouraging active participation from the newer generation of half dime collectors. Both John and I encourage, request and will gratefully acknowledge input for the book. We have not really yet begun; our immediate goal is to establish priorities by Chicago A.N.A.

Some of the rarity ratings that have been published in recent auction catalogs are so far off that I cringe whenever I encounter one. The latest was Lot 250, 1832 V-7 AU in Bowers & Merena Galleries' March 21, 1991 Sale. The first census listed seven examples and this census lists eight. Obviously, the marriage can't be R-8. In light of these kinds of errors, and because of the unknown issue date of Jules Reiver's new half dime VIM, I asked Mark Smith to share his 'rarity' experiences with us. He disregarded all previously published ratings and derived his own. He has methodically recorded the grades and variety of the bust half dimes he has seen. Mark did a super job. The results are included with this census, hopefully a more accurate analysis of the real world.

Reports from this past January's F.U.N. Show indicate that it was a CherryPickers delight! Two high grade 1829 V-16's were cherried by JRCSers. Several die states were purchased that will affect emission orders and there were more half dimes and dealers than variety collectors. Everyone had a truly delightful time!

The Dime Census will be next. Please forward your census and/or list of updates to P.O. Box 205. All census information is treated in total confidentiality as the only identifying feature is a membership number known to the owner and the compiler.

Russell J. Logan

May-91	Capped Bust Half Dimes																			
V#	R#	006	003	002	432	015	181	169	001	012	329	013	011	131	326	068	160	AVG	MAX	
1829	1	5	35	30	25	25	30	40	50	45		40	40	40	20			35	50	
	2	2	45	45	40	50	20	40	50	55	55	50	25	25	35	45		41	55	
	3	1	50	30	40	60	20	50	50	45	45	63		25		6	55	41	63	
	4	4	50	50	40	45	45	50	45	60	45		25					46	60	
	5	6	45	40	40		4	50	30									36	50	
	6	1	50	55	25	50	20	50	45	50	40	62	25	40		45	30	25	41	62
	7	2	60	45	50	60	20	45	45	45	55		50			50		48	60	
	8	5	35	45	40	50	30	20	35	50	12	45						36	50	
	9	3	12	60	40	40	12	40	35	30				10	25			30	60	
	10	7	15	50	40		20	40		45		55						38	55	
	11	5	50	8	40	20	30	50		45					25		20	32	50	
	12	1	60	50	40	50	20	50	40	50	35	40	50	25	45		55	30	41	60
	13	3	55	30	40	50	40	50		30	50		15					40	55	
	14	2	55	55	40	40	8	50	45	40	12		35					38	65	
	15	4	30	30	25	62	10	50	55	45			40	25				35	62	
	16	6	15	50	40	45	35	30		40								36	50	
	17	7				40												40	40	
	18	7	40															40	40	
1830	1	3	45	50	25	50	20	40	35	50	35			25	40			38	50	
	2	3	45	45	25	40	20	50	55	45	30	60			40		55	30	42	60
	3	2	50	55	25	60	8	50	50		60	63	40	40		35	55	45	63	
	4	7	20	15	25	55	12											25	55	
	5	5	55	60	40	55	20	30	40			45	8		30			38	60	
	6	1	60	50	25	50	20	50	50	40	45		15	40		20		38	60	
	7	2	50	40	40	50	15	55	50	50	50		25		15	15		39	55	
	8	2	40	55	40	50	30	50	45	45	45	45	50					45	55	
	9	3	55	40	50	50	8	55	40	30	25		50	25				39	55	
	10	4	60	50	40	58	20	50	45		45	45	25	45				44	60	
	11	5	60	45	40	40	20	8			40		40		45			38	60	
	12	7			63			30										47	63	
	13	7	60	50														55	60	
1831	1	1	60	40	25	55	30	55	55	40	40	45		40	15	45	55	25	42	60
	2	4	60	55	40	40	20	15	45		40	40	40		25			37	60	
	3	3	60	50	50	40	12	50	25	45		60		50				46	60	
	4	2	45	55	25	62	30	50		40	35	55	40	40				43	62	
	5	1	60	30	40	40	30	50	45	30	50	55		40		45	55	44	60	
	6	1	60	40	40	40	40	50	45	30	45	63		40		12		42	63	
	7	3	45	50	40	50	8	50	40	40	40	50	45	25				40	50	
1832	1	2	65	30	40	40	30	50	45	50	63	60		25	40	40		44	65	
	2	2	50	50	40	25	30	50	40	40	50		25	40	30		50	40	50	
	3	3	50	50	40	45	10	30	45	55	50	55						43	55	
	4	6	20	40	50	10	15	45	40	40								33	50	
	5	4	60	30	40	50	10	50	45	45	45	58	50		40			43	60	
	6	4	55	40	40	50	15	40	45		20	40	40	40		8		36	55	
V R#		006	003	002	432	015	181	169	001	012	329	013	011	131	326	068	160	AVG	MAX	

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	V#	R#	006	003	002	432	015	181	169	001	012	329	013	011	131	326	068	160	AVG	MAX
1832	7	6	35	50	40	30	40	8			35				12				31	50
	8	1	60	50	50	50	20	50	50	40	40	50	40	40	20		55		44	60
	9	2	60	55	25	45	40	50	30	45	50	40	15	25		40			40	60
	10	4	50	40	40	50	20	20		55					25	20			36	55
	11	6	30	50	50	15	10	20	30	25			45						31	50
	12	4	60	50	40	50	40	50	40	50	40		50						47	60
	13	4	60	55	25	10	15	40		50	15								34	60
	14	7	40	4	45	62					45								39	62
1833	1	1	60	50	40	55	40	30	45	40	40	62	25	25					42	62
	2	3	40	40	30	30	50					45					50		39	50
	3	3	40	55	50	40	30	45	25			61		40		25			40	61
	4	2	65	45	25	50	20	50		30	30	45	25	40	45	35			38	65
	5	2	50	45	25	50	30	50	55	25	25	58	25		35				38	55
	6	1	60	40	40	55	20	50	45	40	50	55	25	40		20		50	42	60
	7	2	50	45	40	40	15	50	45		40	62	40		30				42	62
	8	7	50		25	30	45					63	63						46	63
	9	7	60	45															53	60
	10	8															55		55	55
1834	1	1	50	45	40	55	50	50	40	40	55	60		25	40		55	25	45	60
	2	4	60	55	40	45	10	50	45		10		25			20			35	60
	3	3	40	40	40	55	15	50	45	30									39	55
	4	1	60	40	40	58	20	50	45	30	50	64	50	40	30	35			44	64
	5	2	55	50	40	40	8	50	45	50	35	50				15	45	50	41	55
1835	1	4	50	40	40	30	20	40	45	50	60		40					30	40	60
	2	2	55	55	40	30	30	55	30	45	30			25	35		40		39	55
	3	1	60	45	40	50	20	50	45	40	40	45	25	25		20			39	60
	4	4	50	50	25	40	30	30	45					25					37	50
	5	2	50	40	40	50	40	50	45	30	45	55	25	40	45		40		43	55
	6	2	45	45	40	30	20	50	45	55	8	63	25		20	45			38	63
	7	1	63	45	45	55	15	50	45	45	63	60	40	40		20	55		46	63
	8	6	60	50	15	20	25	50	50	40			10		45	10			34	60
	9	1	60	45	40	40	30	45	30	30	30			50		20	50		39	60
	10	3	50	50	25	40	45	50	30	45	50	55	20			45		40	43	55
	11	3	50	40	25	40	6	45	45	40	25	50		25	35	40	50		36	50
1836	1	4	50	45	40	20	35	55	45		40	63	50						40	63
	2	2	55	45	25	50	10	55	40		40			40		12	45		38	55
	3	3	65	40	40	45	10	30	40	45	50	40	25	10	40				37	65
	4	2	50	45	40	58	20	55	40	55	40	45		40	25	30	55		43	58
	5	6	55	65	45	20	15	8			25		50		25	8			31	65
	6	1	63	50	25	55	30	55	35	50	45	55	25	40	30	30	50		43	63
	7	4	50	40	40	55	8	30		50	55	60	25		40				40	60
1837	1	2	50	25	25	58	20	60	45	45	50		15	25	20	30	50		37	60
	2	3	50	25	25	50	25	45	55	45	35	50				30	40		39	55
	3	1	45	30	40	40	10	55	40	40	45	50	25	50	25	20			37	55
	4	6	40	45	40	40	20	12	15	50	20								31	50
	5	7	35	10	50	15	20			45	50								32	50
90 KNOWN			006	003	002	432	015	181	169	001	012	329	013	011	131	326	068	160		
COINS OWNED			87	85	85	83	83	80	68	65	65	50	49	42	34	34	24	10		
AVG GRADE			50	44	37	44	22	44	41	42	40	53	33	34	31	17	48	36		

Late Die States, Striking Characteristics, and Rarity of Open Collar Capped Bust Dimes

I have collected Capped Bust Dimes by variety since 1986 and have taken notes on the varieties and specific die states that I have encountered. Many times what I have observed for a specific variety, both in terms of die state characteristics and rarity, has differed slightly from that presented in Davis, et. al. (**Early U.S. Dimes**, 1984). In most cases my observations agree with those of the authors, however characteristics of the later die states are often more pronounced than those listed in the text. The information presented is a summary of my observations of approximately 1,500 dimes (approximately 40 percent of which were open collar) over the past 4.5 years, including dimes both in my collection (113 of 122 varieties), a few other smaller JRCS member collections, and the inventory of a large number of dealers. Unfortunately, with the exception of rare varieties, and key dates (1809, 1811, 1822 and 1824), I have only recently begun an absolute count of numbers encountered. Therefore, the rarity estimates represent a semi-quantitative evaluation. An article on closed collar capped bust dimes will follow at a later date.

1809 JR-1: In **Early U.S. Dimes** (hereafter EUSD), the authors note that late die states have A1 and A2 filled on the reverse. In my experience A1 and A2 have been filled on all examples I've seen (over 25 1809's examined over the last 5 years). It would appear that early die states with unfilled A's are quite rare and that the die chipping resulting in filled A's occurred very early. Also, while not specifically mentioned in EUSD, the left leg of the eagle is often weakly struck with little detail. In terms of rarity, this dime probably is not much rarer than high R-2 to low R-3.

1811 JR-1: A very early die state in my collection shows a flatly struck S9 with S8 strong and S10 very sharply struck. There is no evidence of the bulge over the cap mentioned in the text. Is it possible that the bulge began over S8/S9 first and later extended to the cap? Also this very early die state shows no evidence of a 9 under the

third 1 in the date. I've never seen one in any die state that shows this portion of the overdate. Has anyone else?

An extremely late die state in my collection shows the following characteristics: Reverse cracks severe with the die on several distinctly different levels. Obverse has two additional major die bulges besides the listed one over the cap, the first from S1 to S4 and the second from S12 to S13. An additional small bulge or weakly struck area in conjunction with a crack through the 8 extends from the bottom right dies of the 8 in the date to the bottom of the second 1. In addition an extremely heavy clash mark extends from the right base of Liberty's cap towards S11. At first glance it looks like a gash, however it corresponds exactly to the clash mark on a middle die state coin that I own (only much more severe). The amazing thing about this coin, which looks like an AG at first glance because of the weak strike areas, cracks, and bulging, is that it has 1) a full and strong LIBERTY, 2) S10 complete and distinct from the rim, 3) ear and upper ribbon detail of a higher grade, 4) a clear 0 visible under the second 1, and, on the reverse 5) a strongly struck left leg with considerable feather detail, 6) clearly separated left talons, 7) denticles which are clearly visible over the olive leaves, 8) almost full shield details with the exception of the upper right corner, and 9) almost complete motto. The remainder of this coin is a disaster! This is by far my favorite early dime!

A general question about the overdating that resulted in the 1811/09 date. If two dies were actually engraved in 1809, why did Reich alter the central obverse figure? To improve striking qualities, or some other characteristic of the coin?

In terms of rarity, 1811's are much less frequently encountered than 1809's. Probably a high R-3 to low R-4. Early die states without the reverse cracks are rarely seen.

1814 JR-1: Are there any well struck specimens out there? Every specimen I've encountered has looked terrible. As such, dealers often downgrade this coin. However they also, because of the small date, raise the price due to supposed rarity. I've seen enough to suggest that it's a mid R-3 at best. Well struck versions are definitely rare.

1814 JR-2: In a late die state the reverse is rotated approximately 140 CW resulting in weakness in the denticles over TED STATES OF AMER and in the US of the motto. A high R-3.

1814 JR-4: Curls above ear to above eye are almost always weakly struck. Far and away the most common 1814 dime and very common choice. Low R-2? JR-3 slightly less common but still fairly easy to find. Less common choice.

1814 JR-5: If this is an R-3 coin, then where are all of them? Much less frequently encountered than 1820 JR-1.

1820 JR-1: Much more common than its R-4 listing would suggest. I see several a year, almost all unattributed. I've only seen one without evidence of the die bulge from S2 to S4 suggesting that the bulge formed very early in the life of this die. About as common as the JR-2 Office Boy variety.

1820 JR-2: Reverse often far better struck than obverse.

1820 JR-4: The first use of obverse 1 of 1820 (JR-1) developed a bulge from S2 to S4 on the obverse which apparently was quite stable. No mention of this bulge is made in the description of 1820 JR-4 which used the same obverse, however the photograph in EUSD suggests a bulge. My early die state 1820 JR-4 shows a die bulge identical to the late state JR-1. In addition there are strong clash marks from the eagle's wings in both the right and left obverse fields (entire wings outlined) and a strong clashing of the scroll above the date. A later die state appears to have been lapped again, generally making the entire obverse look flatly struck with even less drapery detail. Wing clashes are gone in this very late die state, however the scroll clash is still very strong.

1820 JR-5: A strong R-4 rarely encountered and much more difficult than JR-6. The several examples I've seen and both in my collection show evidence of porosity. Inferior planchets?

1820 JR-8 and JR-9: For some reason, even though JR-9 is later in the emission order, examples I've encountered tend to have slightly less of the listed S1 to S3 bulge than the earlier JR-8. Both are most often found in lower grades. This obverse shows weakness in hair detail from over the eye to over the ear.

1820 JR-10: A late die state coin in my collection shows an extension of the S13 die bulge to close to the 0 of the date. Additionally a second

die bulge forms from S2/S3 to S4. JR-11 is slightly more common than JR-10. Both are mid R-3's.

1820 JR-12: In EUSD the authors note that the reverse strike is strong with the exception of weakness in the area of ERICA. My early die state specimen does not show this weakness, however the reeding almost disappears above these letters on this portion of the edge. Both obverse and reverse on this coin are exceptionally well struck. Multiple clashing, reflecting very minor die rotation (three separate positions) is evident in several places on the reverse.

1820 JR-13: In a very late die state the bulges on the right reverse (through the arrowheads and through ICA) merge into one large bulge arcing from the rim above R to the bottom of 12 to the top arrowhead to the rim above the middle arrowhead. A second, almost mirror image bulge, arcs from the rim above T1 through the tip of the eagle's left wing through the middle olive leaves to the rim between the middle and lower olive leaves. The rim area between T1 and T3 is also weakly struck with the corresponding obverse rim from S3 to the 1 of the date weak.

1821 JR-1: I have seen what I can only describe as a terminal die state of obverse 1 paired with reverse A. The entire left side of the obverse was gone from the tip of the bust to S7. This was not circulation damage and was not JR2 (R1 was level, A2 was high, and the right edge of C2 was right of the talon tip). My conclusion: Obverse 1 was remarried with Obverse A after JR-2 was produced. Unfortunately this coin was not for sale at the time I saw it. Did anyone reading this get it?

1821 JR-3: I agree with Jim Koenings earlier observation that this is not an R-6 coin. Probably an R-4. Both obverse and reverse (especially wing feathers) are mushy.

1821 JR-5: Eagle's upper left leg is weakly struck on many specimens seen.

1821 JR-8, 9, and 10: JR 10 is definitely the most infrequently seen of the small dates. A definite R-3. JR-8 and JR-9 about equal in occurrence and fairly common (R-1's?)

1822 JR-1: Not a coin that is often encountered and only once above F-12 (though I've seen a few F+ advertised). Like the 1823's and 1824's more common weakly struck on the central and left side of the face.

1823 JR-1: No scarcer than 1823 JR-3. Both readily available and both probably R-2's. Again weak central obverse strikes common.

1823 JR-2: For an R-5 this is a really tough coin. (R-6?)

1824 JR-1: The reverse of my late die state coin shows a faint, but what appears to be continuous crack from the bottom arrowhead through 10C, through the leaves, across the top of UNIT and the bases of ITED and continuing through the bases of STA (i.e. describing an arc of approximately 180 degrees). Very common, probably an R-2.

1824 JR-2: Obverse central device a grade weaker than the remainder of the coin, including the remainder of the obverse. Reverse much stronger.

1825 JR-1: Obverse much better strike than reverse, with typically a full grade difference. Later die state has the reverse rotated approximately 45 degrees CW. All examples encountered have been from the third reverse die use (remarriage after 1825 JR-3). An R-3 coin. First reverse die use coins apparently rarer.

1825 JR-3: Tougher than its R-3 rating suggests.

1825 JR-4: Many seen have bulge to left of date. Fairly common like JR-2.

1825 JR-5: When found almost always in low grades. A definite R-5.

1827 JR-1: Definitely tougher than R-2. While I am leaning towards a 7 over 5 in the date, I am curious as to whether anyone has observed the remnants of another possible digit to the right of the 7. My example, an early die state with projections but not as clear as the example illustrated in the **JR Journal**, shows some irregularities to the right of the 7 that could be interpreted as a highly effaced 5 or 6. I was surprised to see what appeared to be similar irregularities in photographs of an early die state coin published in the **JR Journal** and another in **Coin World**. I assume that I am just imagining a digit

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here or that these irregularities could be the effacing of an original digit punched into the die. Has anyone else seen any early die state examples that show irregularities to the right of the 7?

In addition, very late die states of JR-1 show no recutting of the 7. I have seen one MS-63 late die state which I initially had difficulty identifying because of the total absence of recutting (which I had been using as a diagnostic for JR-1).

1827 JR-2: This is a really tough coin. (R-6?). I've found multiples of all the other R-5's in the five years I've been collecting (with the exception of 1823 JR-2) and at least one of each of the R-6's (except 1833 JR-7) but never an 1827 JR-2. Random chance aside, this coin is not an R-5!

1827 JR-8: High R-3 to low R-4.

1827 JR-11: Some later die states show a weakness of the left leg, upper shield and upper neck. This has a different appearance than a weak strike. Possibly grease or some other foreign substance in the dies?

Any comments on the above would be appreciated.

Louis Scuderi

